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"Brethren: it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now
is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Prepare ye! the Lord cometh

By Lee Stevens, O. H. C.

CHRISTMAS is the statement
of a universe-shattering fact: the
coming of Almighty God into hu-
man history. He became one of

In the Person of the Babe of
Bethlehem, God invaded His crea-
tion to rescue it. The intellect reels
under the impact of this fact.
Think of it! ALMIGHTY — GOD
COMING — DOWN — HERE
RIGHT — WHERE — WE —
ARE — TO — LIFT — US — TO
GLORY — ONE — WITH — HIM! To
this, the Eternal God came
among us as a helpless babe.
Mysterium tremendum! Shot
through with exquisite beauty,
bright, awe-full! Mystery lost in the
heart of God! On Christmas Eve
we will approach a manger, fall
on our knees, and in reverent
awe we will gaze into a straw-
bed crib upon God become Man.
And with the angels and arch-
angels and all the company of
Heaven, we will adore.

For we are to realize all this, if

the miracle of Christmas is to
happen to us, we must be ready.
So our Mother the Church sets
aside for us a season to prepare
ourselves. Advent is a time to get
ready for this experience of God's
coming. We prepare for recalling
His coming in history (in celebra-
ting His Natal Feast); for His com-
ing again to us in the now (es-
pecially in the Christ Mass); and
for His coming in judgment (at
our death and in the last great
day). Two notes are struck in this
Advent preparation: the note of
penitence (hence the color of the
season, violet); and the muted
note of joyous expectancy. To
help us a little in our preparation
for the miracle of Christmas, the
following meditation outlines are
offered — one for Advent, one for
Christmas Eve. And may we sug-
gest a fine book for Advent read-
ing: "The Reed of God" by Caryll
Houselander. (Sheed and Ward).

Advent with the Virgin Mary

(Read St. Luke 1:26-38)

For this meditation I will
kneel beside the Blessed Virgin
Mary and listen as if the Arch-
angel Gabriel spoke to me.

Hail thou that art highly favo-
red! The Lord is with thee. Bles-
sed art thou . . . " Ah, how favor-

indeed am I. The Lord IS with
me. The seed of His Life was
placed in me in Baptism. He
made me a new creature in Him,
a member of His Body. I am His.

I am loved. How infinitely blessed
am I. Through the human nature
He shares with me He pours His
Divine Life and power into me.
He is with me always. He comes
to me over and over, and on His
Natal Feast will come again to re-
new His Life in me.

But wait. As the Virgin was, I
am troubled at Gabriel's words.
Why? Unlike her, I am unfit! I
have sinned against God's love,
again and again. I've wounded

my brethren; I've sinned against my own soul. I AM a sinner; and of myself I am powerless to change my state. I can not look upon the Babe, God Incarnate. I am unfit.

Ah, but HE can change that! If I am sorry. As part of my Advent preparation I will make a thorough self-examination. Then I will go to Him and acknowledge my true state; make a clean breast of my sins and the mess I've made; cast myself upon His loving mercy, beg His forgiveness, a new beginning and a new supply of God power. Then restored refreshed, and empowered through absolution, I may look to the miracle.

II. "Thou shalt conceive," continues Gabriel the Archangel, "and bring forth Jesus." Jesus has been "conceived" in me. In my Baptism His Life Principle was planted in my soul like a seed. It became my Life Principle. I became a Christ-man. He lives in me, and I in Him . . . right now.

He wants to grow in me . . . and be "brought forth" in me, again and again and again, all through my days. This is all subject to His laws of spiritual growth and development. This Advent is a season to let Jesus be born again in me. A period of "gestation" . . . like the nine months of Jesus' silent, hidden growth in the warm darkness beneath the Virgin's heart. Be very still this Advent, my soul. Withdraw often from the world's clamor the Christmas rush, the bustle. Be still. Let the Divine Christ grow in you . . . in

secret . . . in the darkness within.

Jesus IS growing in me. Now I know it. I will give Him my humanity to be changed into His. Live your life in me, Lord. Deepen my faith that it is happening even now.

III. But with Mary I cry: How CAN this thing be? The Archangel answers: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore . . ."

I cannot cause the Christ to grow in me. God the Holy Ghost works the miracle. He is working now silently, hiddenly in my soul. Be still, soul. Let the miracle happen this Advent within thee. Speak of it to no one; keep it close. Quietly, hiddenly, gently all through Advent let the mystery unfold within: Jesus growing growing, growing . . .

IV. "Be it unto me according to Thy word". The Virgin's surrender is absolute, unconditional. Surrendering herself completely to the Holy Spirit, she "Turned the key to open the door of heaven's love". (Dante). And God the Son comes through her as through a gateway . . . into His world . . . as Man.

Be it unto me as you will, Lord. Help me get my self will and self concern out of the way this Advent. I want to surrender my being unconditionally to your Holy Spirit working within. Prepare me in these days that I may be ready to receive Jesus, to let Him be formed in me, live in me, go out in me to others in love. All mine

long let this happen . . . more
and more, until it is indeed not I
no live at all, but Christ who
eth in me.

Then when I pass through the
il called death, I shall be un-
aid; I shall go with Him. And
en He shall come in glory in

that last great day to judge both
quick and dead, I shall have no
fear; I'll be living in Him because
he lives in me.

All the ends of the world have
seen, alleluia.

The salvation of our God, alle-
luia.

V. Come and save us, O Lord of hosts.

R. Show the light of Thy countenance and we shall be whole.

meditation for Christmas eve

(Read St. Luke 2:1-20)

"While all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in
the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty Word, O Lord,
leaped down out of thy Royal Throne, alleluia."

V. All the ends of the world have seen, alleluia.

R. The salvation of our God, alleluia.

PICTURE: a cold starlit night . . .
weary travelers from Nazar-
to Bethlehem . . . the young
man on the donkey watched
in tender solicitude by her hus-
and. Hidden under her heart lies
Light of the World seeking a
ce to be born among men . . .
ed of God, Light of Light, Very
ed of Very God, begotten not
de . . . there is no room for
a in the inn . . . so in a cave
hole on the hillside warmed
by the body heat of dumb
imals . . . a tiny wail in the
nt, birth cry of a new born
be . . . the miracle has hap-
ed! The Prince of Peace is
n into His world, His throne a
of straw in a cattle shed.
shepherds watch their flocks in
distance . . . suddenly the
pens open and angelic hosts

appear . . . the terrified shepherds
hear the stunning news: "Fear
not: for behold, I bring you good
tidings of great joy, which shall
be to all people. For unto you is
born this day in the city of David
a Saviour, which is Christ the
Lord! And this shall be a sign
unto you: Ye shall find the babe
wrapped in swaddling clothes,
and lying in a manger."

The shepherds hasten to the
stable . . . let us go with them . . .
steal quietly into the shed . . . be-
hold Mary and Joseph gazing
with rapt faces at the Holy Child
. . . compelled by an overwhel-
ing desire to worship, we drop
silently to our knees and adore
. . . we are in the Presence of God
. . . this Babe is God Incarnate . . .
God made flesh . . . God become
Man . . . God entering His world

... "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

BEHOLD THE HUMILITY OF THE SON OF GOD. How low He comes. Emptying Himself of the "glory He had with the Father before the world was," He takes unto Himself our frail humanity of the Virgin Maid. Becomes a babe with all the tiny infant's helplessness, dependence. No fanfare; nor court to welcome Him. How different from the little English Prince Andrew's recent birth; the whole world received the news that a prince of the realm had appeared! But the Prince of Heaven and earth comes stealing into His world to save it. Because He loves us. Because each soul is infinitely precious to Him. He knows the deeply-seated malady from which we suffer, that frightful wound of our fallen nature, PRIDE. To cure this wound, He lays aside His Divine Glory, comes as a servant and takes our nature upon Him, is born in poverty and obscurity in a lowly cattle shed in the cold winter night. Already the shadow of His Cross has fallen over His crib. He will be despised and rejected by those He comes to save, will die a shameful death alone on a cross . . . to save us (to save ME)

from the power of sin, pride, self-centeredness . . . by lifting us up into Himself.

Ah, the sweet humility of Jesus. How clearly He shows us all through His life what is the true relation of creature to Creator: **humility, dependence, obedience.** And to us He says: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." He can come into humble, trusting, obedient hearts. What about mine on this eve of His Feast? Will He find it so?

HE IS COMING AGAIN TONIGHT . . . HUMBLY . . . HIDDENLY. To be born again at His altars in the Midnight Christ Mass all over His world. To be born again in the hearts of His faithful people. To be born again in ME tonight. He is coming hidden under the small white Host, humbly and trustingly letting Himself be placed in my hands, on my lips . . . God of God . . . Light of Light . . .

He wants to be "brought forth" in each life tonight, tomorrow, day after day, continually that His Kingdom may come on earth. He wants to be brought forth in me; wants to use my tongue to speak His Truth, my feet to carry Him to His needy children, my hands to minister to them. **He wants to live His life in me, nothing less.**

glory to God in the highest, and on
earth peace, good will toward men



MARIGOLDS TO HEAVEN

by a Novice

"After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said: Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." (Revelation 4.1)

THE CHURCH to which I was assigned after ordination was a mission which had no rectory because there had never before been a resident priest. As a temporary expedient, an apartment was found, the second floor of a private home in the town. This apartment was reached by an outside staircase, a gigantic construction of Victorian wrought iron, which hummed and vibrated and shook the whole house whenever anyone ascended or descended upon it. The couple who lived in the first floor apartment had two small daughters, aged four and six. From the beginning, it was obvious that the two little girls were intrigued by the strange new gentleman who would dash up and down the outside stairs with long black skirts blowing in the wind and wearing a peculiar hat with a fluffy ball on the top. The strange gentleman, being new and a bit lonely, was equally intrigued by the two little girls. But any hopes of friendship were

dashed to pieces the very first night when he overheard their father giving them stern warnings about never going up those outside stairs, and never speaking to that "minister" or pestering him in any way! And so for several days, whenever the outside stairway would hum and vibrate and shake the whole house, two little faces would appear at a downstairs window, noses pressed flat against the glass. If the coast was clear of parents, there would be much waving and smiling — nothing more.

But true love will always find a way in the end! One afternoon, after a week had gone by, I was vaguely conscious of hearing the mother call to the children in the back yard that she was off to the store for some shopping, would not be gone more than an hour, and if they knew what was good for them they would not set foot out of that yard while she was gone. The car door slammed, the motor roared, and off she went!

Within a matter of seconds there was a humming and vibrating and the house began to shake. Next came a knock on the door which I flung open and there they stood, grinning from ear to ear, the older holding out a tremendous bouquet of dead marigolds. The marigolds were not merely wilted; they were stiff and brown, dried out and thoroughly dead. I remembered having seen them on top of a trash basket out front that very morning. But of course trash is not trash to a child. Trash baskets, especially the neighbors', are a source of wonderful treasures! So I received the marigolds graciously and ushered them both inside.

By the time we had the flowers arranged in water, most of the ice was broken; by the time they had tried on the biretta and tickled each other with its pom pom, we were friends for life and even the parents were won over in the end! The final episode to the story occurred the next morning when the new cleaning woman arrived. I just happened to catch her in time to save the marigolds from going into the trash for the second time! I am sure she thought I was insane. To her they were horrible smelly, dead things. But to me they were the loveliest flowers in the whole world because they were the outward and visible sign of a new love and friendship, the first in a strange town.

I can still close my eyes and see that wonderful scene — the two children standing there in

the sunshine, framed by the doorway, holding out the huge brown bouquet. It is a scene I like to look at often because it is a perfect picture of what prayer is and an excellent picture of what we do at Mass.

We all know and lament the fact that the average Christian does not pray as he should. He may get down beside his bed at night and recite "prayers." He may request things of God in time of trouble or need. But anything more than this is exceptional. Furthermore he is apt to become uncomfortable at the very suggestion of such a thing as mounting up, passing through the door of Heaven, and conversing intimately with God as friend to Friend. Yet this is what true prayer is; this is what each of us could be privileged to do! The Holy Cross Rule expresses it beautifully: "We must remember that God is ever waiting for us to come to Him, and that in our meditation we enter into the secret place of His Presence, that He may speak with us as with Moses of old."

How many Christians act as if they really believed or experienced that kind of prayer? We go off to our meditations with dragging feet; we allow them to be crowded out of our day so often; and, strangest of all, when we do make a meditation we are apt to take a book along! When we pay a visit to a close friend we never go armed with a book to read in case the conversation should lag! When a couple in love

hold hands in the moonlight they pass the time very satisfactorily without the aid of books! But then these two comparisons are not completely fair, because — while our relationship with God is based on love — still we do not see God with our eyes, we do not hear His voice with our ears, our knowledge of Him is so limited, the gulf between us and God is enormous.

Perhaps it would help to think of it in this way. Suppose you were writing a play in which two little girls aged four and six decide that they want to become friends with a priest who has moved into their neighborhood. Suppose you have a scene in the play where they actually appear on his doorstep and knock. He opens the door and they stand there facing each other. What would you have them say to him to explain their presence? What words would you put into their mouths? When you consider the difference between them — the priest with all his years, his education, his experience — what would a four year old say to him that would sound reasonable and convincing and open the door to friendship? It would be extremely difficult to find just the right words for her!

Yet how masterfully those two real-life children handled that very situation. They did not say anything! They simply smiled and offered a present, let that speak for them. They trusted that the one who was older and wiser

and more experienced would take over from there, and their plan worked! Their offering was accepted. They were taken inside. In the process of arranging the flowers in a vase and admiring them, all self-consciousness was forgotten, conversation began to flow naturally, and love was born.

Prayer works in exactly the same way. The gulf between us and God is infinite, so we cannot just present ourselves at his door and begin a half-hour conversation. We do not know God that well; we are children in the spiritual life. So we too bring a present to speak for us. Instead of flowers, our offering is usually a meditation, but the result is the same. In examining some scene from the Gospel, reading some passage from a book, or going over certain points with our Lord, we lose our self-consciousness; words do spring to our lips. He who is infinite Wisdom takes over from there, opens the door to us that we may enter the secret place of His Presence and speak with Him as Moses did of old.

The worst mistake we can make is to forget that meditation is only a means to an end, a device to get us inside. We are apt to become so absorbed in the meditation that we forget all about our Lord who is there beside us. Or we behave like delivery boys! We go right up to the door, hand over the gift and then leave! All the while God is holding the door open and longing to have us enter and converse with Him that

we may know Him better, that our love for Him may be deepened. "I looked, and behold, a door was opened in Heaven: and I heard a voice which said: Come up hither and I will show thee things . . . "

That same scene — two little girls smiling in a doorway, the older holding out a bunch of marigolds on behalf of them both — is a picture of the offertory at every Mass. There the children of God are gathered before an altar, the doorway of Heaven, and one of them, a priest, holds up bread and wine on behalf of them all. The bread and wine are like the marigolds. They are outward and visible signs of the love that we are offering to God. They represent Christ, His perfect love which we are giving to the Father, and in this sense they are a perfect offering. But they also represent "our selves, our souls and bodies," and in this sense they are far from perfect! We, like the marigolds, are not merely wilted. We are nearly dead in our sins as any good self-examination will reveal. We come as "sick, to the Physician of life, unclean to the Fountain of mercy, blind to the Light of eternal glory, poor and needy to the (door of the) Lord of heaven and earth." But in God's eyes our offering is a precious one because it is made out of love. God accepts our offering, lifts up our hearts, opens the door and ushers us into the court of Heaven. He lets us stand before Him and sing along with His an-

gels and arch-angels and the whole family of Heaven.

One of the aims of the liturgical revival is to correct overly sentimental notions that the Mass is just a means to achieve the Eucharistic Presence on our altars so that we can visit Jesus in the tabernacle and allow Him to visit our souls. Rather the Mass is this assembling of the children of God that we may hear His word. Then in response to that Word and in gratitude for all that God has done for us, we join with Christ in offering a gift to this Heavenly Father who loves us and who surely smiles as we mount the stairs to His doorway. We give ourselves to Him Who made us in the beginning, that He may remake us now, that He may "heal our sickness, wash our uncleanness, enlighten our blindness, enrich our poverty, clothe our nakedness." Holy Communion means that God does all this. He opens the door and takes us inside, "that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us."

"I looked, and behold, a door was opened in Heaven: and I heard a voice which said: Come up hither . . . "

Prayer and the Mass are actions of such richness that we could study about them for a lifetime and only scratch the surface of their meaning. Yet, in their essence, prayer and the Mass are actions so simple that a child can perform them. Except we become as little children in this matter, we

shall never pass through the door and enter the Kingdom of Heaven. To know about God is important; to know God is what really matters. We are the children of God. Somewhere in our life God has smiled upon us and awakened our interest in Him. We long to know Him well, to love Him, to be His friends. But while we live here on the first floor of this earth, the process often seems long and discouraging. We catch only fleeting glimpses of God. Heaven can seem very high up and far away. However close we try to press our faces, we always see

through a glass, darkly. But if, at prayer and Mass, we faithfully keep on presenting ourselves at the door to Heaven, God will keep on opening to us and revealing Himself more and more until we finally pass through that door forever and come to His eternal kingdom. And in the meantime it may help to remember the example of two small children who, after much longing and patient waiting finally climbed an iron staircase, stood smiling in a doorway, offered a gift which was accepted and treasured, and passed through the door to much joy. ●

BEGINNING next month, we hope to run a series of articles on the seven Sacraments. As a little introduction we offer:

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THIS WORD SACRAMENT?

by John Hall

(speaking on behalf of the Church).

Mean (probably something less than the whole truth, and ultimately some personal concept, shaped by the world's assault on my life)

Why (and large, however, the Church manages to keep a solid concept in mind, in spite of the personalities which shape her life, and because of the operation of the Holy Spirit in her)

Is which, like all words, covers a concept too big to be completely comprehended)

Word (cannot describe with any accuracy to ways of God with man, but . . .)

Sacrament (God working through physical means is the way by which God and man have contact, ultimately without need of man's words)

And (there are two generally necessary for salvation — five others generally acknowledged to have been ordained by Christ and practiced in the Church from earliest times)

Outward (you have to make a conscious effort to do it; it will not happen of its own accord)

And (you must have authorization — differing for the different Sacraments — to do so, even though the personal character of the one officiating does not affect the quality of the Sacrament)

Visible (also perceivable by other senses)

sign (water poured on forehead, or person immersed. with Baptismal formula; etc.)

of (something signifying an act of grace accomplished, and also participating in the accomplishment of it)

an (act of grace specifically designated)

inward (affecting the whole person)

and (preparing the person for immortality)

spiritual (involving the fruits of the Spirit, which we receive as a result of being made whole by the Sacraments)

grace (of utmost importance, but free)

given (not earned by us, but by Christ, who made full satisfaction under the Law for us)

unto (regarding Baptism and the Eucharist, to anyone on the point of death; otherwise, unto the faithful or to those about to become such)

us; (so that we are Baptized, Confirmed, Communicated, Absolved, Anointed, Married, an . . .)

ordained (the Sacraments were prefigured in the Old Testament, but there were no true Sacraments until Christ)

by (command or implication)

Christ (and established by the Holy Spirit in the Church)

himself, (especially Baptism and the Eucharist, but also the others by implication)

as (not magic, for the effects are not visible)

a (not that there are not others)

means (which can be counted on)

whereby (because it is specifically through the saying of the words and the doing of the act (s) designated that the specific grace is communicated to us)

we (the members of the Body)

receive (reception in faith being necessary to obtain the benefits of a Sacrament)

this (washing away of sin, the Holy Spirit, the life of Christ in us; forgiveness of sin after Baptism, healing, joining of two souls in wedlock, or reception of power and authority to act as a minister of Christ)

grace, (freely given and objectively bestowed, although it is possible to receive the Sacraments to our damnation)

and (God can, of course, work His grace by any means at all, but He has chosen these means for our use)

a (sure and certain)

pledge (through the Church universal)

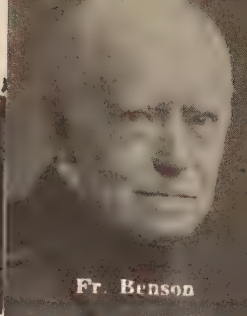
to (having participated in the action of the Church as a member, and having been a recipient of that action)

assure (by the sign which the Church makes)

us (the faithful, in this way, know that the grace has been accomplished inwardly and spiritually, and they have witnessed some of the ways of God with man)

thereof. (for it is God who has given this assurance.) ●

S · S · J · E ·



Fr. Benson

THE OLDEST community of men in the Anglican Communion is the Society of St. John the Evangelist, founded in 1866 by the Reverend Richard Meux Benson and two other priests, in what was then a suburb of Oxford in England called Cowley St. John. The members of the Society are, therefore, commonly known as "the Cowley Fathers." This was probably due to Father Benson's indifference to all such secondary matters as names, cut of habit to be worn, and titles. The Society came first, and the name came later. For some time the Fathers called themselves the "Evangelist Fathers."

Most of us have met would-be founders of communities who begin with all the romantic details of a name, a special habit, and ceremonial customs copied from some ancient community. Father Benson was interested only in the essentials of the religious state. He had read deeply all the available material on the older communities. He did not try to make a little Anglican copy of any one of them. The double-breasted cassock worn by old-fashioned clergy of his day, and such as he had always worn, sufficed him for a habit.

It was in the contemplation of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, that he found his inspiration of the family life of his community. Nothing less than the mystery of the Incarnation sufficed him as the special devotion of his society. Even the Rule was slowly formulated as the members of the Society arrived at their way of life through meditation on the fundamental mysteries of the Faith. The essentials were Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, corporate prayer, silence, study, good work — all in large doses.

When the Rule was finally formulated, it was a picture painted with a large brush. It has proved curiously adaptable to various conditions. There were not many small details. If silence was to be kept, it was for a good long time, not for little odd times in the course of the day. The Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer were recited with their large measure of psalmody and Scripture. This linked the Society with the whole Anglican communion and with the parish clergy for whom Father Benson had a deep admiration, for he knew that many of them in their own vocation knew more about poverty than

some religious. He had a strong sense of obligation to the canonical law. The wishes of the local clergy were to be carefully followed when the Fathers were assisting them — as in preaching missions. Obedience included obedience to the Bishop and other authorities of the Church. He did not encourage any idea of a gulf between the "parochial clergy" and the "regular clergy."

In addition to the Daily Offices of the Church, the Fathers said the Day Hours according to an old translation and adaptation of the Sarum rite. This linked the community with all the multitude of religious men and women throughout the world and down the ages who have that form of devotion. When you remember the controversies in the Anglican Communion in the last half of the nineteenth century, it is interesting to note, in reading the Rule and Constitution of the Society, how Father Benson and his companions rose above all party strife. They did not think of their community as the handmaid of some section within the Church with the job of forwarding certain party shibboleths. The Rule and Constitutions contain no expressions not found in the Prayer Book. The same is true of all of Father Benson's writings. He is occupied with the great fundamental things — the holiness of God, and the Incarnation as the means of man's attaining to that holiness.

The house of the Society was

at first a couple of workmen's cottages, and when the first Mission House was built, it had no loveliness that any one should desire it. It was cheaper to build several stories on one foundation and under one roof, than to spread out. Accordingly, a minor skyscraper was built, with the Chapel under the roof. What a plain chapel it was! There was nothing romantic about it. It had a certain beauty in its classic simplicity; plain benches for the community, an altar with a cross and a pair of candlesticks for the focus of devotion. Earthly ornamentation had little attraction for one who was so often contemplating the heavenly vision. The Society then, as now, grew slowly. In those days only those who meant business would see beyond the outward austerity to the beauty of holiness present there.

When the writer of this article first went to Cowley shortly after his profession in America, the new Mission House was in use with its house Chapel, but this was still far barer than many "low churches" in the United States. One or two of the aged Fathers still doubted the use of reservation except for exceptional cases of sick persons; and so at that time there was no public reservation in the community Church or House Chapel, but only in the remote Chapel of the original Mission House. By that time, the old "Iron Church" which Father Benson had had built, an artistic horror of corrugated iron and match-

and boarding, but full of the spirit of prayer and sacrifice, had been replaced by a fine parish Church and by the beautiful community church.

But even this latter seemed somewhat lacking in colour and warmth of outward decoration to the one who had come from America, where the romantic movement was in full swing in the "high churches." Restraint was the special note of our community church in that day, as restraint was the note of the life of the Society. There is wisdom in restraint. If all the steam is blown off through the whistle, there is none left to drive the engine!

Father Benson had desired with deep desire to go to India as a missionary. His heart was set upon it. When he went to ask the permission of his Bishop, Samuel Wilberforce, that extraordinary man (although he did not know it) founded our Society by saying, "No." He told Father Benson he wished him to remain as Vicar of Cowley St. John and to set to work to minister to the growing industrial suburb between the edge of the City of Oxford and the village of Cowley.

A less romantic task could scarcely be imagined. Rows of ugly workmen's cottages were there, inhabited by very simple people, far removed by their lack of education from the Oxford dons and other cultured clergymen associated with Father Benson. Father Benson made the great act of renunciation, gave up the idea

of going to India, and set to work making himself at one with the sordid new suburb. It must be the way of the Incarnation! It would not do to live in the old Rectory in rural Cowley a mile or so away. He must tabernacle like his Master among those whom he would serve.

Our Society, therefore, grew out of Bishop Wilberforce's "No," and Father Benson's self denial. The Society just emerged. There was no advertising, no interesting articles with illustrations of cassocked clergymen engaged in ceremonies or household tasks.

From the start there was a strong American element. Some of the men who first joined Father Benson were priests from this country. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the Society branched out, it was to the United States. This took place in 1870.

Among those who joined Father Benson was a priest of the Church of Ireland, Father O'Neil. He formed the first seed of a Province of the Society in India. In him, Father Benson had the joy of seeing someone do what he had hoped to do himself. In that same spirit of the Incarnation, Father O'Neil made himself at one with the people of India, living in the same utter poverty and simplicity as they do.

As time went on, the Society grew. It never has had great numbers. It has fathered many other communities of men and women which have grown far more rapidly than itself; but whose founders



The American Congregation SSJE

had their training in the Religious Life from the Cowley Fathers. There are now provinces in India, South Africa, and Japan; and a third Congregation, beside the English and American ones, in Canada.

Priests and Laymen may enter the Society. The postulancy usually lasts about six months or more. Then the aspirant is clothed as a Novice. The Novitiate goes on for two or three years. Then a priest who is already thirty may take life vows, but those not yet thirty, and laymen, take simple vows for a period of years before taking life vows. The chief work of the Society is prayer. Out of this life of prayer, works missionary and educational grow —

schools, foreign missions, home mission work, and especially the giving of parochial missions and retreats. Books written by members of the Society would fill a good many shelves.

The work of the Society in the United States is centered in greater Boston. The Mother House is near Harvard University in Cambridge. It is a very beautiful group of buildings designed by a parishioner of the Society's Boston Church — the late Ralph Adams Cram. The Chapel is a strikingly beautiful and satisfactory house of prayer. There is still a little of the Cowley touch of severity and restraint there, but there is a warmth and friendliness also. Here the novices are trained both

or work in the United States, and also to supplant those trained for the work of the Society in Japan.

Across the Charles River, in Boston, is the old Mission Church on Bowdoin Street, behind the State House. It was an intensely old Congregational Church, taken over by a group of high-church laymen almost a century ago, as the first Church with free Jews in Boston and the first Church touched by the Oxford Movement. Thanks to the artistic ability of Father Field, Ralph Adams Cram, and Father Dale, its ugliness has been veiled and its bad proportions disguised. Its original purpose was to serve the poor people in what was one of Boston's first slums. Reconstruction of the city is now doing away with the bad old conditions.

Then, farther to the south, is the Church of St. Augustine and St. Martin, built by Father Field in such a way that if the population changed, it could be sold for a warehouse. He had three times to move the Church. It was originally designed for the care of the large coloured population which gathered in Boston at the time of the War between the States, and after. These have now become solid citizens, many of them persons of culture and education. Father Field had a large hand in helping to bring this about. He cared not only for their souls, but he started industrial schools and schools of art, and encouraged boys and girls to

work hard and better their conditions. St. Augustine's, because built functionally, but with good proportions, is a beautiful Church. It never became a warehouse! It is filled every Sunday with a devout congregation. The music and ceremonial are beautiful, and the spirit of devotion manifests itself by great congregational participation. In the sanctuary, as servers, can be seen every Sunday, grandfathers trained by Father Field, with their sons and grandsons.

As in the other branching-out of the Society, the Canadian Province was started in the same spirit of the Incarnation. A rough area, once a prosperous lumbering country, but cut over, and with a population of poor people who had been stranded there when the lumbering moved on, had become a problem for the Bishop of Algoma. The little churches were in bad repair. It was impossible to provide them with clergy. Summer students helped keep up some semblance of Church life, but the people were discouraged. It seemed as though no one cared for them.

It was on the eve of the great depression when two Fathers and a Brother were sent there. They settled down to live among the people as the people themselves had to live, and to support themselves as best they could. They began in a tumbledown parsonage without water or electricity. They cared for half a dozen tiny places. Before long, they were

able to acquire for very little a few acres on the edge of the county seat, and there they built with their own hands and the aid of the local people, what was the "largest monastery in Christendom." They grew in numbers. They acquired more land and ran their own farm to give an example of what could be done in a simple way in that rocky and sandy country. More missions were opened up, and simple little churches were built by the people's own gifts and exertions. At one time they served about forty little congregations. The Sisters of St. Margaret and, afterwards, the Sisters of St. John the Divine, came to help them. Much social service work was done.

After the depression, conditions

gradually changed. The roads were improved. Tourists began to use the smaller lakes. People had cars. Fewer little churches were needed, as people could drive greater distances. A beautiful set of buildings was added to the Community House. The Society kept in the mainstream of Canadian Church life, and so was able to be a help to all sorts of clergy and laity. The new dignity given to the rural Church work, and the new unity, understanding, and mutual appreciation between churchmen of all schools of thought in Canada, were certainly partly due to the prayer and work of the Society.

The Society both in the United States and Canada is in need of more vocations both of laymen and priests. ●

HE OPENED THEIR UNDERSTANDING

By PAUL C. WEED, JR.

WHEN the apostles came to our Lord, and with real desire asked Him, "Increase our faith," Jesus replied by comparing faith to a grain of mustard seed. If you have just a tiny bit of faith, it is enough. It must have pleased our Lord that they came to Him and asked for faith; then He knew that they knew faith is a gift of God. We cannot buy it, or get it by our own efforts. Nevertheless we can prepare the soil,

so that when the seed of faith falls into the ground it may spring up, and bear fruit an hundredfold.

What we can do to prepare for the gift of faith, is to seek to understand God's plan in creation. One of the greatest miracles recorded in the Gospels is that which happened when it is recorded that the Risen Christ "opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." To understand, just a little bit, to catch a little glimpse of

God's plan, this will deepen our faith. Then we can pray better and love better.

T. S. Eliot says that, "true poetry can communicate before it is understood." It is with this same attitude that we can approach an understanding of our religion. Let us begin by thinking of what we mean by "Eternal Life." At one time the English theologian Frederick Von Hugel was asked to write an article for the Encyclopedia on Eternal Life. He began his studies and went deeply into what people have meant when they used this term, not only as Eternal Life is spoken of in the Bible, but wherever the word has had real content and meaning. Von Hugel ended up by writing a whole book on the subject.

But his conclusions are utterly simple, direct and illuminating, and the first point he makes is that for us Eternal Life is something that is both here and hereafter. It begins now but is only fully to be realized in the life of the world to come. But the experience which we have now of Eternal Life is valid. There is no discontinuity between what we know now of Eternal Life and that which exists in God. We do not have to wait to catch a glimpse of Eternal Life. This is just what St. John says over and over again. "God hath given us Eternal Life, and this life is in his Son." And our Lord Himself said, "And this is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God,

and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Von Hugel's second conclusion is that the content of Eternal Life is a "Totum simul," — all things in one. Thus it is not an abstraction, or an empty concept, but a rich, full life such as comes when all the past, all the present and all the future is pressed into one.

Where does Eternal Life fit into the scheme of God's creation? How do we understand the depths of Eternal Life? Man has the ability to understand, because he has the ability to reflect; that is, — he can stand off and behold that which has gone before and think about that which is to come. He can be objective. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says, "Reflection is the power acquired by a consciousness to turn in upon itself, to take possession of itself as of an object endowed with its own particular consistency and value: no longer merely to know, but to know oneself; no longer merely to know, but to know that one knows. The being who is the object of his own reflection, becomes in a flash able to raise himself to a new sphere. In reality, another world is born." Eternal Life is born for us in reflection.

Reflection is the unique quality of man, — that is, he is the only one of living things who has the power to reflect. Other living beings can see and hear, eat and drink, know passion and emotion, possibly even, they can learn to reason. Because after all reasoning is largely a process of putting

two and two together in a mechanical way. But man alone can reflect, and look, and know awe. The philosopher Aristotle begins his "Metaphysics" by saying that "all knowledge begins in wonder." Only man can say "Heaven and dearth are full of thy glory," and can appreciate the worship which Isaiash saw in the temple as he heard the angels sing their "Holy, Holy, Holy."

What really helps in regard to this whole matter of Eternal Life is to see how it stands up to the brute reality of the world, as science presents it to us. What we would like is to see that there is just as much of an ontological fact in Eternal Life as there is an ontological fact in rocks and atoms, earth, sky, sea, man, life and trees. Faith is dimmed because we do not see how the Incarnation stands up against the brute facts of daily living. We are apt to withdraw somewhat when it comes to bringing faith face to face with science, art, politics, literature and the so-called "hard facts of life." The end of such withdrawal is to make of religion little more than a matter of beautiful thoughts, — moral persuasions for the good, the true and the beautiful.

There is a whole new line of thinking that is coming up today and has been presented to us by some of the most eminent scientists of our day. Igor Sokorsky, LeComte de Noye, de Lubac, Alexis Carrel, and in the writings of a man who died just four years

ago — Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. These men are not easy to read, and yet there is no doubt that we can get the drift of their thinking. We can get the broad sweep of their vision, even when it is difficult to follow the details. They "communicate," even before they are "understood." And with the confidence of understanding comes a deepening of faith.

For instance, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin quite boldly accepts evolution as God's purpose working in creation. There is a teleology in all that happens. Here let us put out of our minds once for all, the suspicion that there is a real basic conflict between evolution and the account of creation given by Revelation in the Bible. The Bible story is to reveal to us the truth that God is, and that He began things. It is not interested in the scientific explanation of how this all began. Let us remember that there is a second account of the creation, that given in the prologue to St. John's Gospel. There is no question but that growth and development and purpose in nature is one with that purpose of God revealed in the Bible.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin asks us to go back in thought to the very beginning of things when God created matter and there was the first coming together of "things." This he calls cosmogenesis. "God spoke the Word and it was done." Then as the complexity of things increased and when conditions became suitable

There was that other beginning which was part of God's plan. There was the beginning of life. How are we to understand the beginning of life? Pierre Teilhard gives several suggestions.

First of all, we must look at the inside of things. What is the meaning of matter? "Things have their within; their reserve, one might say; and this appears in definite qualitative or quantitative connections with the developments that science recognizes in the cosmic energy." The advent of life becomes intelligible when we look on the within of things. Or, secondly we can think of how things can suddenly find a new center which makes them take on an entirely different and new relationship to that which existed before. But however it happened the beginning of life marked a tremendous moment in God's plan. This beginning of life can be called bio-genesis.

Then there is the third great step in evolution which may well be called homo-genesis. This is where human life begins. As we have already thought, perhaps the distinguishing mark of this is that it marks the appearance in life of the act of reflection. Suddenly there is man. He stands in his own power by all that is meant by the inside of things. Now the spiritual comes into existence as an ontological fact.

So with the advent of man we have the beginning of all that is meant by love and freedom and responsibility. "And God said,

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Here is where written history begins. Love and faith, goodness and glory are now possible in God's creatures. And just as truly are their opposites possible, hatred and rebellion, evil and frustration. For man, created in the image of God, had freedom.

History tells us clearly how disoriented man became. Evil played havoc with man's destiny. Man failed in the purpose of his creation. "The thoughts of men's hearts are evil," the prophets say over and over again. Sin entered in to destroy the finest that was in man.

But when the fulness of time was come, and all things were ready, God began a new era in his plan for creation. Here we see the end towards which all creation was moving. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came down from heaven to destroy the power of sin, to forgive sin, to set things straight and to bring eternal life to man. He established by the Incarnation the Kingdom of God in this world, and by his death on the cross, He made it possible for the thoughts of men's hearts to be cleansed from every evil. By His resurrection and the coming of the Holy Ghost He opened the way for Eternal Life.

Now we do not see through a glass darkly, but we see clearly that the purpose of God from the very beginning was that man might be one with God in love. Looking back we can see that

this love is the power working in all things, from the coming together of the first bits of matter, the beginning of life, the creation of man who by reflection knows that he loves. It is this force of love which Christ established in Himself, that through Him all men might come to the end of their creation, which is union with God.

Such a vision of God's purpose enables us to see the place that art and literature and science have in God's plan. Art is man's attempt to convey the beauty and rhythm of form, and color, and light, and sound. Art is a real revelation of Eternal Life, — all things in One. Literature is rich with man's understanding of human life and its relations, and problems and joys and sorrows and depths of love. Science is the power which God has put in the hands of men that they may understand and use things for the end for which they were created, that is union with God. The Christian can accept the fullness of the world as it is and yet need not be overcome by any of the frustrations and meaninglessness of tragedy or destruction that is there. God's plan is being fulfilled and this is found as all things lead to Jesus Christ in whom is revealed the perfect man, Eternal Life and oneness with God. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. I am the way, the truth, and the life," our Lord says.

Because the Incarnation is an ontological fact the spiritual world is as real as the material world.

In fact it is the "inside" of things that gives power to the "outside" of things. This Eternal Life which God has established as the crown of His plan of creation is the most important fact of existence. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God," our Lord said. And it is by prayer and worship that man lives in the Kingdom of God.

Prayer is the highest activity man can enter into. "If you can pray, if you have in any degree acquired the holy art, then for God's sake and for man's sake, do not do anything else, — give yourself to it; continue on the Mount with hands upraised. There will be no lack of fighters down below who will triumph with the help of your prayers." (Arthur W. Robinson)

Here is where we come right down to where we are today. God has given us the ability to pray. Pray for yourself. Reach out hands of intercession for all those you know and love. Praise God in your prayers. Pray for the souls of those who have died and now live in Christ. Pray with the saints. You will bring more things to pass by your prayer than any actions which you might do, no matter how great you might think these actions to be. Prayer is for the purification of the thoughts of men's hearts. Prayer is for the unification of all men in Christ. Prayer is to make us one with the holy souls in purgatory that we with them may grow to the fulness of Eternal Life with God in heaven.

There are many vocations open to man, but the highest of all is the call to pray. And praying is something a child can do, the old can persevere in. It is open to the wise in this world as well as the ignorant. Lord open the

eyes of our understanding so that faith may grow, and we may grow, and we may pray better. ●

1 Vladimir Simkhovitch says that the heart of the wisdom of Christ is His perception that "the kingdom of God is within you," the reality of that which is within.

BONNELL SPENCER, O.H.C.

Supplement to the Supplement

II. THANKSGIVINGS

IF THE Supplement, at present under consideration by General Convention, is adequately to enrich the Prayer Book, it would be well to include a group of propers that permit the grateful commemoration of the mighty acts of God. These are, to be sure, remembered in the course of the Church Year. But there are occasions when it is desirable to recall them at other times, and the propers for their feasts are too closely associated with the event by which they were originally revealed to be suitable for this purpose.

Summer conferences and camps, parochial missions and so forth, for example, usually schedule a daily Eucharist. At these what is needed is the commemoration not of a few obscure saints but of the great central truths of the Christian revelation, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the

Atonement, the Resurrection, the Sacraments, etc. And at other times the intention of a daily Eucharist also makes these themes especially appropriate.

Furthermore there are in the present western Calendar certain doctrinal feasts which in their Roman form would never be acceptable to Anglicans, but which have sound teaching value in concentrating on the significance of the central truths of the faith. The following thanksgiving propers would permit these feasts to be kept in a more acceptable form.

On all these counts it is recommended that the Supplement include Thanksgivings:

1. For the Love of God

The ultimate basis of the love of God is not that He loves us but that He is love in and of Himself, a Trinity in Unity. The prop-

ers for Trinity Sunday do not bring out the relationship between this fundamental truth and its expression in the redeeming love manifested in Christ. The failure to stress this connection has encouraged those doctrines of the Atonement in which Christ is portrayed as propitiating a hostile Father. The following is suggested to commemorate the process of redemption as the expression of the triune love God is in Himself. It also might serve as a theologically grounded substitute for the sentimental Feast of the Sacred Heart.

O GOD, Blessed Trinity who by the redemption procured for us in Christ hast manifested the eternal love that thou art in thyself: Bestow upon us, we beseech thee, the infinite treasures of thy grace, that we, dwelling in love, may evermore dwell in thee; who livest . . .

Epistle: Rom. 5:1-11. Being justified by faith . . . received the atonement.

Gospel: John 5:17-24. Jesus answered them . . . passed from death unto life.

The preface for Trinity Sunday is appropriate.

2. For the Holy Name of Jesus

This commemorates the Incarnation in terms of the credal statement that Jesus 'for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven.'

ALMIGHTY God, who hast taught us to find salvation only in the Name of Jesus: Mercifully grant

that thy faithful people, ever glorying in his Name, may make thy salvation known to all the world; through the same . . .

Epistle: Acts 4:8-12. Then Peter, filled . . . whereby we must be saved.

Gospel: Matt. 1:20-23. While Joseph thought . . . God with us.

The Preface for the Purification, etc., is recommended.

3. For the Holy Cross and Passion

This commemorates the actual process by which our redemption has been wrought by God.

Collect for Monday in Holy Week, Prayer Book, p. 138.

Epistle for Palm Sunday, Prayer Book, p. 134. (Phil. 2:5-11).

Gospel: John 12:31-36a. Now is the judgment . . . children of light.

Until there is a proper Passiontide Preface, the Easter Preface might be used.

4. For the Triumph and Reign of Christ

These are the propers for the Feast of Christ the King. But they are appropriate for the commemoration of the triumphal aspects of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who didst will to restore all things in thy well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that all the kindreds of the earth, set free from the calamity of sin, may be brought under his most gracious dominion; who liveth . . .

Epistle: Col. 1:12-20. We give thanks unto . . . things in heaven.

Gospel: John 18:33-37. Then Pilate entered . . . heareth my voice.

The Ascension Preface might be used.

5. For Holy Baptism

The renewed emphasis on the significance of this Sacrament, which until recently has been so grossly neglected, makes a liturgical commemoration of it imperative. This could well be the Anglican form of the Feast of the Precious Blood.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, we give thee humble thanks for the gift of Holy Baptism, whereby we are born again and made heirs of everlasting salvation: And we beseech thee to grant that we who have thus been made partakers of the death of thy Son may also be partakers of his resurrection; through the same . . .

Epistle: Rom. 6:3-11. Know ye not . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gospel: John 4:9-14. Then saith the woman of Samaria unto Jesus, How is it . . . into everlasting life. It is true, of course, that the water of Baptism is not drunk. This did not seem an insuperable difficulty to St. John in using this episode to expound that Sacrament, and need not be for us. But if it is thought so, Matt. 28:18-20 could be substituted.

Preface of Easter.

6. For the Holy Eucharist

The other of the two Gospel

Sacraments also needs a proper for the commemoration of its institution. It would provide for the Feast of Corpus Christi. In a Collect at the Eucharist it seems better to pray that we fittingly 'celebrate' rather than 'venerate' this Sacrament.

O GOD, who in a wonderful Sacrament hast left unto us a memorial of thy passion: Grant us, we beseech thee, so to celebrate these sacred mysteries of thy Body and Blood, that we may ever perceive within ourselves the fruit of thy redemption; who livest and reignest with the Father . . .

Epistle: 1 Cor. 11:23-28. I have received . . . drink of that cup.

Gospel: John 6:43-58. Then Jesus said . . . shall live for ever.

Preface of the Purification, etc.

7. For the Eternal Priesthood of Christ

Another truth which is rightly receiving renewed emphasis today is that the Church is fundamentally a priestly Body, offered by Christ in sacrificial worship, wherein each member has his active part to be expressed both in the liturgy and in a life of dedicated service. To give thanks for the tremendous Godward significance of our Christian heritage the following is suggested:

O GOD, who for the glory of thy Majesty and the salvation of mankind, didst appoint thine only-begotten Son to be our great high Priest: Mercifully grant that we, who in him have been made an holy priesthood, may offer up

spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto thee; through the same . . .

Epistle: Heb. 5:1-9. Every high priest . . . that obey him.

Gospel: Luke 22:14-20. When the hour was come, Jesus sat down . . . shed for you. This is the account of the Institution which is rarely heard, and because of its strong eschatological emphasis deserves to be used more often.

Preface of the Ascension.

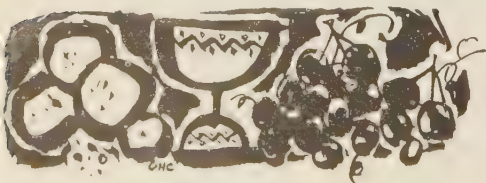
8. For the Divine Bounty

There are other occasions besides Thanksgiving Day when it is desired to give thanks for some special manifestation of God's Providence. The following is a more generalized proper, which emphasizes the relationship between gratitude for material blessings and the ultimate purpose of union with God.

O MOST merciful Father, who of thy gracious goodness dost hear the devout prayers of thy Church. We give thee humble thanks for all thy bounty: And we beseech thee to continue thy loving-kindness unto us, to thy glory and our comfort; through . . .

Epistle: Deut. 8:11-14, 16-18. Beware that thou . . . as it is this day.

Gospel: John 6:27-33. Labor not for the meat . . . life unto the world.



THE CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS

*part five in a
series on Prayer in the
Early Church
by Sister Elspeth of All Saints*

WE PASS now a little farther north to tell the story of the three Cappadocian Fathers — St. Basil, his brother Gregory of Nyssa and St. Gregory of Nazianzus. They might have been reckoned among the Christian Platonists of Alexandria, if they had not had such a distinctive career of their own. St. Athanasius was their personal friend and Gregory Nazianzen preached his funeral sermon. Its conclusion shows how close they were together.

'From the study of Holy Scripture he grew rich in contemplation, rich in splendor of life, combining them in wondrous sort by that golden bond which few can weave; using life as the guide of contemplation, and contemplation as the seal of life.' He goes on, 'O thou dear and holy one, mayest thou cast upon us from above a propitious glance, and conduct this people in its perfect worship of the perfect Trinity, who we contemplate and adore; and mayest thou possess and aid me in my pastoral charge.'

It was the portion of these Cappadocians to discover the happy phrase 'Three Persons in one Substance,' which the Church adopted at the Council of Constantinople, 381 A.D., ending the fifty-six years of conflict with those who were trying to undo the work of the Council of Nicaea. This introduction is necessary to explain their place in this series.

The ordinary reader (and he only if he is a Bible reader) knows Cappadocia best as one of the provinces under St. Peter's charge near the end of the first century. Really it is a very interesting province, which once had a language of its own, and important business connections with the ancient Empire of Assyria. Its people were therefore no barbarians, but heirs of an ancient culture. In the fourth century it was a mountainous province, divided mostly among large land-owners, who sent their sons to their local university or even to Athens, and spoke good Greek. We first hear of Basil's family from a saint of the previous century, St Gregory the Wonder-worker, who converted Basil's grandparents to Christianity. He has a very lively story of his own, and was a great admirer of Origen. He tells how Basil's family witnessed for the Faith in the neighboring province of Pontus, and had to take refuge in the woods, suffering many hardships. When the persecution was over, they came back to Cappadocia, and had a high reputation for holiness. Basil's

father married a woman named Emmelia, who gave him ten children, of whom four are reckoned among the saints.

Basil's father was anxious to secure a great future for his brilliant son, and sent him to Athens to study the law — then as now a very lucrative profession. There he met his life-long friend, Gregory, the son of the Bishop of Nazianzus, not far from his own home. This Gregory was at Athens before and after Basil, and became one of the most eloquent preachers of his day, and something of a poet. Writing of Athens, he says, 'I sought there eloquence, but I found happiness, for I found Basil.'

Basil came home to find his father had died, and his sister Macrina a great influence in the family. She reproached him for his pride and worldliness — he was not yet baptized; but he paid no attention to her and accepted a professorial chair at the nearest university. There he did well himself, till one day a great misfortune fell upon the whole family in the death of his brother Naucratus. Naucratus had been the flower of the flock in beauty and sweetness of temper, as well as in his true Christianity, caring for the poor on the estate. Basil's quick mind caught the lesson at once, and he decided to give himself to the service of God.

There were plenty of good works to be done near home; but this was not enough for Macrina nor for Basil. Macrina had al-

ready asked her widowed mother to build on their property a monastery for women, where they should lead an ascetic life, sleeping on the ground and having only one meal a day. She persuaded her mother to join her and to eat at the same table as her former slave girls, accepting no conveniences that they did not share. Strange as it may seem to us, many women were found willing to enter the community. This was the first monastery for women in Asia Minor.

Basil, now thoroughly in earnest, went off to Egypt to see for himself how the monks and hermits lived there. He admired their austerity and singleness of purpose, but thought it was lacking in one respect. Were they not neglecting one of our Lord's chief commands? Basil's monks were to be quite as ascetic, but they were to serve not only God but man. To every monastery of his Order was to be attached a hospital, a school or an orphanage. But one motive which lay behind his decision was certainly Basil's own deep pity for the poor. In his world there was a great contrast between the life of the poor and the life of the rich. In spite of his incessant labor for the faith, he spent himself unceasingly on behalf of the destitute and suffering.

Basil made two Rules for his Order, very long and diffuse; but they are still the foundation for all Religious Life in the Eastern Church. He composed a Liturgy for his monks, founded on the

Psalms, with special stress on the work of thanksgiving. He had a delightful correspondence with Gregory Nazianzen about the site for the first monastery — a point on which they differed greatly, though probably they were teasing each other. They were very true friends. Gregory says in Basil's funeral sermon, 'He rounded a few cells for hermits, not far from the monasteries, that the contemplative spirit might not be cut off from society, nor the active life be uninfluenced by the contemplative, and all might live for the glory of God.'

We have not much space to give to St Gregory Nazianzen, though his life is full of incident: he belongs more to the sphere of theology and to the general history of the Church. But Gregory of Nyssa has a history especially his own.

In his earlier days he seems to have had a defiant streak, wanting to be a little 'different.' When the family acquired a wonderful treasure — some relics of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste — they decided to build a chapel in their honor. Every member of the household must take part in the procession. But Gregory refused: he said he did not believe in relics, and ran away to another part of the garden. He was rebuked for his scepticism by a terrible dream in which all the Forty Martyrs barred his way with swords and shields. Later, when the rest of the family became interested in the monastic life, Gre-

Gregory chose to marry. The marriage did not last long — the reason is hard to discover; but we know that in those days it was not difficult to get a marriage annulled in favor of the Religious life. Not long after, when Basil became an archbishop, he made his brother bishop of the little see of Nyssa, that they might work together against the Arians.

From this time Gregory began to set his face towards the high paths of the ascetic life, where he was destined to be a guide to so many. He was already a serious student of Greek philosophy, which he loved for its own sake; and he had come to be sure, like Clement and Origen, that Plato and the Greeks had laid foundations for the study of God and man, which truly helped in the understanding of the Christian religion. He began in his writings to use the old philosophical terms.

Basil died in 379, only fifty, worn out by his work in founding his Order and by constant conflict with Arian emperors and bishops. In 380 his sister Macrina also died, having probably shortened her life by her austerities. But her work for women was firmly established. At the end she sent her brother Gregory to tell him she was very ill, probably dying. He came in haste to spend the last hours with her. They spoke of nothing but heavenly mysteries. At the last moment she wanted to sing the hymn 'For the lighting of the Lamps, but she could not. It was Gregory's part

to close her eyes and perform the last rites. He wrote the story of her life with a tenderness and care which give us some idea of the reverence and affection he had for her.

He wrote her life in the hope that it might provoke others to follow her example. Not long after he added the treatise 'De Virginitate.' He dealt with this subject in an unusual way, saying that Virginité was a quality of the soul rather than a condition of the body. It is the point where man is nearest to the image of God in which he is made. For God alone is perfect purity: He alone gives all and keeps nothing for Himself. Man is nearest to beatitude when he surrenders all to God. 'I wish,' Gregory said, 'that I could show you a few more perfect examples of this virtue; to me my brother Basil is the most perfect virgin I know.'

Here all is quiet and restrained; and this seems to be Gregory's special understanding of the life of prayer. But because he has the soul of a poet and the gift of making vivid word-pictures, he sometimes tries to express the inexpressible. Like many others since, he is fascinated by the story of Moses on Sinai and his encounter with God as he climbed. He also wrote a treatise on the Song of Songs and one on the Psalms: both are efforts to describe the union of the soul with God. He uses language of paradox in alluring forms when he speaks for Moses and the Bride of

the Canticles. But he does not claim for himself, as far as we know, any mystic experience that is not available to all those who desire the Vision of God. He himself does not say that he has perfect 'knowledge of the Truth,' as the Neo-Platonists did: and no one knows better than he what it is

to be both the seeker and the sought.

Perhaps, in spite of his interest in the less familiar ways of prayer, it was through his missionary work and the guidance of souls that his own Church is most in his debt, as we shall see in the next instalment. ●

PEACEFUL IMPRESSIONS

by Thomas James Peters



The first glimpse of Holy Cross Monastery was from the train, looking across the Hudson River. Now comes to mind our Lord's words: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (St. Matthew 5:14) There was something about the view, although eyes had never beheld it before, that said: This is the place you seek; Undulating hills and rippling waters below continued until the bridge at Poughkeepsie was visible ahead; the long and tiring ride was ended, the final step in the journey would be short. Excitement was more like nervousness as the climb up that street to the bus stop was

made, and then began a wait for transportation. A prayer was answered: "O God, send some means for getting to Holy Cross." Uncertainty about the bus grew with the realization that it was a holiday. Twice the taxi drivers attempted to solicit a fare, twice they were deliberately refused. "Could not it have been senseless to accept their offer their price obviously greater than the bus?" The car stopped, the driver asked me, "Are you going to Highland?"

"No, to West Park."

"Oh, to Holy Cross?"

"Yes."

"That's where I'm going."

The ride was pleasant, the driver pointing out the many other religious establishments on the way. Through the trees was the Roosevelt home, but only the silver water tank could be discerned. Farther on, across the river, was the palatial residence of the Vanderbilts.

At last the car drove down the curved road to Holy Cross Monastery. Dinner was in progress, with silence kept by all, save one who was reading. Then all fear vanished: the faces around that table were friendly. Naught so comforting, so prone to bring peace, as a smile from a strange face. And though the meal was simple, it was not to be regarded as anything but delicious.

A walk to the rocky beach below; some reading while sitting upon an old, wave-beaten log; during the building, all so wonderful words could not describe

the quiet atmosphere. And daily celebrations of the Mass.

Best of all was the solitude of the cell. The words from Psalm 4, read daily at Compline, rang with meaning: ". . . commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still." Nothing but a crucifix adorns the wall, and words written earlier echoed my thoughts:

Look upon the Cross, O soul;

The Tree on which your Saviour died.

Glory only in its sweetness,

And swallow all your sinful pride.

Desire truly to be hung there.

And likewise to be crucified.

The call to vocation had been made, time and patience would be the answer. Even though it was not new, but rather had been that which prompted the Retreat now in progress, yet more clearly was seen the value of patient waiting. A desire for perfection, usually stirs the heart at such a time as this. But, more important was this feeling a fleeting fantasy, soon to pass after departure? But, oh soul, be patient. Only a call which persists, refusing to be subdued in the harsh world, is a true call. Thomas a Kempis was surely right when he wrote: "the habit and the tonsure help little, but the changing of life and the mortifying of the passion make a perfect and true religious. He that seeketh any other thing in religion than purely God and the health of his soul, shall find nothing there but trouble and sorrow,

and he may not long stand there in peace and quietness that laboreth not to be least and subject to all." It is the loving intent to know God, not the monastic life alone, though the religious know both, that makes a man holy. Impetuosity does not become God's saints, but rather perseverance.

Peace, found easily in a cloister must first be found in the cruel and common worldliness known by all. You cannot run from work or study to find peace: it must be discovered wherever one happens to be. Only by loving God and your neighbors, whatever the environment, brings peace. All is but vanity unless done for Christ. Without the desire to serve only the Holy One of God, who is God, nothing but deep unrest is experienced. Rebellion easily follows unrest: that bitter passion, often considered falsely to be good; but rebels are soon put down, either in utter humiliation or death of the soul, and also of the body if rebellion is persisted in.

Who can know the things concerning God, except he knows God? To seek knowledge is indeed noble, but to seek first wisdom is nobler, for all knowledge without wisdom is but fruitless labor. Study, unless it burns within and causes prayer, is poorly founded. Wise men are not always learned but they all have understanding: that inward consciousness of the harmony to be found in all good things, even though they may be perverted by

wickedness.

It is difficult to do right when to do wrong is easier, hard to love where hate abounds, seemingly impossible to be perfect when those around us are so imperfect in our eyes. We must look for the good in everyone, or the potential goodness, for to do otherwise is wicked and leads to that base sin: pride. Not until humility is known can good pour forth, for Satan flees the spirit of humbleness and meekness. The easiest way to pride is foolish talking, for an unchecked speech shows an unchecked and evil heart.

The chanting of the Offices, performed daily in accordance with the seasons and in celebration of the saint's days, are the outward expression of beauty found within. The keeping of silence, when regarded by all, becomes so natural that you find nothing to say, or recognize that what would have normally been said is unnecessary and, perhaps, better unsaid. The whole community blends its particular loves for God into one tremendous love, bringing peace.

All these things: the silence, the solitude (leading to contemplation), the beauty, the praises raised lovingly to God, the smiles and goodly instructions, give a sense of security and impression of peace. Any stay at Holy Cross Monastery cannot be lightly forgotten. It calls hearts back again for other retreats, or leaves a searching desire of the soul unsatisfied and only aching to be answered.

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MARY
WE
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AND
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OF
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COMFORT,
LIFE
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HOPE,
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COMMUNITY NOTES

Soon after his consecration, the new Bishop of Western Michigan, Dr. Charles E. Bennison, wrote to the Superior asking for as many of the Fathers as could be spared for conducting Missions in the diocese. Every parish and mission was to take part in this diocesan-wide effort to deepen the devotional life of the communicants and to reach out after the unchurched. The second week in October was selected for the Missions and a missionary was assigned to each church and chapel. Three Holy Cross Fathers were sent; Fr. Smith to St. Joseph, Fr. Spencer to Battle Creek, and Fr. Turkington to Kalamazoo.

The Bishop had prepared for the Missions by calling on his clergy and

laymen to unite in every effort to make the Mission week a witness to the power and love of God in His Church. In the experience of the Fathers who assisted the Bishop in his plan, the Mission Services were a great blessing to all who attended and the influence of the prayers and Christian fellowship extended throughout the whole of the Church in Western Michigan.

On the 19th of September, Fr. Parsons, Fr. Spencer and Br. Andrew attended the High Mass of Thanksgiving at Holy Cross Church, Kingston, N. Y. commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Order of St. Anne. The Rt. Rev. J. Stuart Wetmore, Suffragan Bishop of New



rk, presided at the Mass, which
 as celebrated by the Rev. K. A. B.
 nds, rector of Holy Cross Church.
 llowing the service, a Communion
 eakfast was held in the Parish
 use, at which Bishop Wetmore
 ke. The festivities were well at-
 ded by friends and associates of
 Order of St. Anne and by repre-
 tatives of other Religious Commu-
 nities.

It is always a day of great joy in
 v Religious Community when one,
 er years of patient waiting upon
 d and trusting in Him, kneels be-
 e the altar and consecrates himself
 y and entirely to our Blessed Lord.
 r day of great joy and gladness
 me on the 4th of November, when

the Brother Charles, under tempo-
 rary vows for the past two years,
 made, in the context of a Solemn
 High Mass, to the Father Superior,
 and in the presence of Bishop Wet-
 more and the assembled brethren of
 the Community, the three-fold vow
 of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience,
 for life. Brother is the second Cana-
 dian to be life-professed in our Com-
 munity. Many of his friends from
 Canada were present for the pro-
 fession. The service was followed by
 a reception. Brother is stationed at
 St. Michael's Priory in St. Andrews,
 Tennessee, and is teaching chemistry
 at the school. We thank all of our
 friends who came to the monastery
 for the Profession, and those who re-

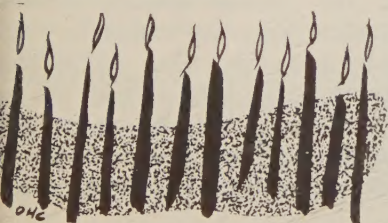


membered Brother in their prayers on that day.

For the second year, Father MacBurney, chaplain at Dartmouth College, and the Episcopal students on the campus invited the Novitiate to Hanover for the Dartmouth-Holy Cross football game. There was great excitement in the air as the group left the monastery under the watchful eye of Father Parsell on Friday morning. The trip was breath-taking. The autumn foliage was never lovelier. On the way they visited Weston Priory in Vermont, a Roman Catholic Benedictine foundation from the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem. The novices were graciously received by the Abbot, shown through the Priory,

and invited to attend None. The priory is particularly interesting because it follows a primitive and strict observance of the Benedictine rule. They left with the Abbot's blessing and went on to Dartmouth. Father and Mrs. Hodder entertained the novices for tea to meet some of the students and faculty of the college. After tea they attended Evensong. St. Thomas' Church, had supper at the Parish Hall and that evening joined in the pre-game rally and bonfire. In spite of many prayers and unbounded novitiate enthusiasm for the Dartmouth team, Holy Cross College edged a winning point in the last few seconds of the game. Many thanks to Fathers MacBurney and

dder and all of the students and
ulty for a tremendous weekend.
Ve remembered especially all of
friends and benefactors at the
emn Mass on Thanksgiving Day.
s you who make our life possible
our prayers and gifts are received
the same spirit in which they are
en . . . in the spirit of Christ.
Ve wish all of you, our Holy Cross
ily and friends, a holy Advent
a blessed Christmas.



NEWBURGH NOTES

"My daughter, what dost thou desire?"

"I desire for love of Jesus to devote myself, body, soul, and spirit to the service of Almighty God in the Religious Life, as a member of the Order of St. Helena; and to that end to take upon me of my own free will the vows of Religious Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience."

These words begin the Office for the Life Profession of a member of the Order of St. Helena. On St. Luke's Day, 1960, a Solemn Mass and the Profession Office took place at St. George's Church, Newburgh, and two junior professed, Sister Grace and

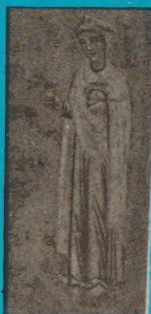


Sister Elisabeth, knelt to take their life vows and to receive the ring, the cross, and the Rule of the Order. They were surrounded by a choir of rejoicing Sisters, many Fathers and brethren of the Order of the Holy Cross, and friends from far and near. The Father Superior, O.H.C. received the Sisters' vows and celebrated the Mass, and Father Tiedemann, O.H.C. preached the sermon. After luncheon, the Profession guests came to tea and open house at the Convent and helped us celebrate.

Sister Mary Florence gave two Children's Missions this month: one in Stroudsburg, Pa. and one in Valley Stream, N. Y. Eight Sisters attended the annual Solemn Mass held

by the American Church Union at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in New York City to which the Religious Orders are especially invited. We've also been kept busy at home with house guests and visitors.

The Profession Day was one of the last days of Indian summer and the weeks since have been full with last minute harvesting, outdoor cleaning and planting in preparation for the deep frost. The last touches are going on the Chapel: glazing, flooring, painting. Each day brings us closer to the great move when the last Mass is said in our little Chapel; the last Office sung; and the choir stalls, chairs, and all are moved and the first Office sung in our new home.



DECEMBER APPOINTMENTS

- 1-4 Fr. Gunn, Shreveport, La., St. James, Mission
- 1-4 Fr. Baldwin, Chattanooga, Tenn., Christ, Mission
- 1-11 Br. Francis, Rochester, N. Y., All Saints, Children's Missions.
- 2-4 Fr. Spencer, Racine, Wis., DeKoven Foundation, School of Prayer.
- 2 Sr. Joan, Dallas, Texas. Church of the Holy Cross, Quiet Evening.
- 5-9 Fr. Spencer, Racine, Wis., DeKoven Foundation, School of Prayer.
- 6-8 Fr. Turkington, Maryland, Diocesan Retreat
- 7 Sr. Elisabeth, Hyde Park, N. Y., St. James, Slides and talk on Altar Guild work.
- 9-12 Fr. Turkington, Bayshore, L. I., Retreat.
- 12 Sr. Joan, New Paltz, N. Y., St. Andrew's. Talk on Divine Office.
- 22 Fr. Harris, Albany, N. Y., Confessions.
- 27-31 Fr. Hawkins, Toronto, Ont., Community of the Sisters of the Church

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Mr. S. Franklin Gould. Photographs taken at Holy Cross Monastery, Pages 423 and 455.

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. Samuel H. Kress Collection: Pages 424 and 461-462. Mellon Collection: Page 457.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC: Page 458.

Mr. Robert Charles Brown. Illustration, Page 429.

(Cover design and all other art by the brethren of the community.)

An Ordo of Worship and Intercession

- Dec. 16 Ember Friday V Proper Mass col 2) Advent i — for all bishops
- 17 Ember Saturday V as on December 16— for the increase of the Min
- 18 4th Sunday in Advent Double I Cl V col 2) Advent i cr pref of Tr
— for the Order of St. Helena
- 19 Monday V Mass of Advent iv col 2) Advent i — for the faithful depa
- 20 Tuesday V as on December 19 — for the Seminarists Associate
- 21 St Thomas Apostle Double II Cl R gl col 2) Advent i cr — for the
lates of Mount Calvary
- 22 Thursday V as on December 19 — for the Confraternity of the Chris
Life
- 23 Friday V as on December 19 — for the reunion of Christendom
- 24 Christmas Eve V Proper Mass col 2) Advent i Gradual without A
luia — for the Sisters of the Holy Nativity
- 25 Christmas Day Double I Cl W gl cr proper preface till Epiphany un
otherwise directed at 3d Mass LG of Epiphany — thanksgiving for
Incarnation
- 26 St Stephen Proto-Martyr Double II Cl R gl col 2) Christmas cr —
Mount Calvary
- 27 St John Apostle and Evangelist Double II Cl W gl col 2) Christm
— for the Society of St John the Evangelist
- 28 Holy Innocents Martyrs Double II Cl V col 2) Christmas Tract in
of Alleluia cr — for St. Andrew's School
- 29 St Thomas of Canterbury BM Double R gl col 2) Christmas cr — fo
Anglican Communion
- 30 Within the Octave Double W Mass of Sunday after Christmas gl
for the Novitiate of the Order
- 31 St Sylvester BC Double W gl col 2) Christmas cr — thangsgiving
the blessings of the year



NOTICE! We are no longer including the Ordo each month in our magazine. Our Publications Department this year has available:

- **ORDO** for 1961. Booklet 50c each
- **HOLY CROSS CALENDAR** for 1961
(See ad on opposite page)